



NEWS RELEASE

Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission
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GOV. HOEVEN, IOGCC TASK FORCE MEET IN DENVER TO DISCUSS OIL AND GAS PERSONNEL ISSUES

DENVER – North Dakota Gov. John Hoeven and members of the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission (IOGCC) Petroleum Professionals Task Force met here Wednesday to discuss the potential future shortage of qualified oil and natural gas personnel and steps that government and industry can take to address the problem.

Gov. Hoeven, IOGCC Chairman-elect, heads the task force, which has worked since late last year to develop solutions to the precipitous decline of new workers in an industry that continues to grow ever more important to national security.

Currently only a small percentage of graduate students in petroleum science in the U.S. are U.S. citizens, Gov. Hoeven noted in a letter to President Bush last July. "While this nation should feel honored that the rest of the world flocks to our universities to learn about petroleum technology, these scientists will not stay in the U.S., but will be returning to their own countries."

Today's meeting, which included members of the task force and Denver-area petroleum industry leaders, focused on industry personnel measures.

Last June, the task force released a series of specific recommendations to address the issue. That report was submitted to President Bush, along with the IOGCC's publication "Human Resources: The Missing Piece of the Energy Puzzle." The 2001 assessment of manpower needs authored by Dr. William F. Fisher of Texas is available by calling the IOGCC at 405/525-3556 or visit the IOGCC Web site at www.iogcc.state.ok.us.

The task force concluded that the solution to the current personnel shortage requires a national effort of both state and federal governments, academia and industry focused on three areas: education of key stakeholders in the nation's energy future, outreach to the public and students, and adequate research and development.

"This may not be an obvious problem today, but will be a real problem in less than a decade," Gov. Hoeven noted. "When the shortage of petroleum professionals becomes a reality, it will be too late to deal with successfully. Today, we are in front of the curve and through directed federal and state policies have an opportunity to solve the problem."

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The IOGCC, representing the governors of 30 member states and seven associate states, promotes the conservation and efficient recovery of domestic oil and natural gas resources while protecting health, safety and the environment. Established by the member states' governors in 1935, it is among the oldest and largest interstate compacts in the nation. For more information, visit the IOGCC Web site at www.iogcc.state.ok.us.